The Power of Worship

By Christopher Monaghan
I want to acknowledge my good friend and mentor, Todd Westphal. Thank you for always believing in me and encouraging me to go for more of Jesus in worship. You are to me, like Jonathan was to David. I dedicate this book to you because you model a heart of worship.

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CONTENTS

Chapter 1  Overcoming Worship.........................5
Chapter 2  Change the Atmosphere.....................13
Chapter 3  Our Passionate Duty.......................21
Chapter 4  Zeal for Worship...........................35
Chapter 5  Prophetic Worship..........................49
Chapter 6  The Foundation of Worship.................59
Chapter 7  Freedom to Worship.........................71
Chapter 8  How To Survive An Attack..................81
Chapter 9  The Spiritual Act of Worship...............93
Chapter 10 Is Anyone Happy?............................103

About the Author.......................................117
Chapter 1
Overcoming Worship!

“May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands.”

(Psalm 149:6)

Worship gives us the ability to enter into a heavenly realm where we gain strength, confidence and vision to overcome the challenges we face in the earthly realm. The praise of God in our mouths is like a double-edged sword through which we conquer our enemies. I am not implying that we ever focus on demons and Satan as we worship, but it is in darkness when we flip the light switch. The light switch represents giving adoration to our Heavenly Father and His Son,
Jesus Christ. As His presence descends, it crushes my enemies like a tin can in a metal press!

Character is produced as we worship because we are persevering in our declaration of God’s goodness no matter what we face here on planet earth. The result of pressing into God’s presence releases joy, maturity, wholeness, and complete provision. James declared in his letter:

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

(James 1:2-4)

**Don’t Let A Shot In The Chest Stop You!**

Teddy Roosevelt served as the 26th president of the United States and was well known for his bold leadership. History records that as he was getting ready to speak while campaigning in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1912, a saloonkeeper shot him in the chest. An experienced hunter, Roosevelt knew that, although the bullet was lodged in his chest, as long as he wasn’t coughing up blood, he would be OK to speak as scheduled. He knew that if the bullet hadn’t reached his lung, he had no immediate reason to go to the hospital. X-rays would later show that the bullet had penetrated three inches of tissue and had lodged in Roosevelt’s chest muscle.

Few of us would have even remotely considered doing anything else but rushing immediately to the hospital. Not Teddy Roosevelt! With his knowledge of the human body and his determined leadership, not even a bullet to the chest could stop him from moving forward! This story gives me strength to pass on word to all who desire to stand before the LORD and minister. Don’t let a mere shot to the chest stop you!

I have had the honor to be a leader in worship for almost 25 years at the time of this writing. My journey has been filled with seasons of ecstatic joy and seasons of pain and difficulty. In
the past, I had fallen ill from the rejection of man, but now I have developed immunities to both the praises and rejection of man, enabling me to be free of the fear of man. Those seasons of rejection allow us to find our source of strength in God. Proverbs 29:25 warns us that “Fear of man will prove to be a snare.” We must not be like the religious leaders of Jesus’ day who, “…loved praise from men more than praise from God.” (John 12:43)

The message I want to share in this writing is the great power given to us through our worship. I pray you will walk in the same boldness that Teddy Roosevelt did throughout his life. You will experience pain in this life but you can also experience the power that flows through a worshipping heart. The scripture that has been the foundation of my life is found in Romans 12:11-12.

Never be lacking in zeal but keep your spiritual fervor serving the LORD. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.

Throughout this book I want to give you a perspective needed to see the body of Christ plugged in to the power of worship. Joyful perseverance is needed if we are going to bring heaven to earth in our communities. Teddy Roosevelt’s story reminds us that as we go about the work of God, there will be attacks and there will be opposition. Paul wrote to the Christians in Ephesus:

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

(Ephesians 6:16)

Roosevelt miraculously survived the shot to his chest because the bullet was blocked by his steel eyeglass case and a thick, fifty-paged single-folded copy of the speech he was carrying in his jacket. The bullet had limited impact because it had to travel through these two items that I believe carry significant meaning.
Having A Vision To Worship

Roosevelt’s steel eyeglass case represents his solid vision; if you have vision, you can persevere in just about anything. Responding to God in worship requires such vision; it must not be just an act of emotion: it must be an act of devotion. Experiencing worship will lift you out of your current situation into a place of power that must cover your heart at all times.

King David experienced the protection and comfort released through singing songs of deliverance! “You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance” (Psalm 32:7).

I can remember a season in my own life when I had been betrayed and watched everything around me falling apart. Looking back, I appreciate the ability I had to declare God’s goodness as I listened to song after song declaring my breakthrough even though I felt like giving up and throwing in the towel! Worship pulls down the reality of your situation from God’s perspective. Nothing that happens here on earth can cause fear on the throne of God. Paul said to the Ephesians, “God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6).

The other object that hindered the bullet from hitting his heart was a fifty page folded copy of his speech. The number fifty represents the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There are exactly fifty days between the feast of First fruits, when Jesus was risen, and the feast of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out. We read about what happened to the disciples exactly fifty days after the resurrection of Christ: “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place... all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit...” (Acts 2:1,4).

The enemy’s bullets are stopped by the shield created by the words of God that have flowed into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Often these words come sung not spoken! Declaring the reality of who God is and how great His love is for us is one of the greatest tools we have in spiritual warfare!
Teddy Roosevelt addressed the gathered crowd, opening with the comment, "Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know whether you fully understand that I have just been shot; but it takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose". Roosevelt went on to speak for ninety minutes that day but he carried that bullet in his chest for the rest of his life.

The Power of Worship is written for anyone who seeks to bring the atmosphere of heaven to earth. This book is more of a straightforward, go-for-it message to a believer to worship than a critique of why power is not flowing. I believe success is 10% talent plus 90% passion for God not 90% talent with 10% passion for God.

Declaring God’s Enduring Love

When a king of Israel was being brought into battle against three different nations, he placed the worship leaders in the frontlines! Every victory against our enemies begins with exalting the King of the Universe. It is time that worshippers arise and step into the front of the army.

Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: “Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever.” As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. (2 Chronicles 20:21-22)

Victory was brought about as the Lord ambushed the enemies of Jehoshaphat in the midst of their praise. They declared, “Give thanks to the LORD, for His love endures forever!” The word for love in this verse is the word hesed. Hesed is one of the most important words in the Hebraic Scriptures, meaning “mercy, love, kindness, faithfulness.” The word is often translated “steadfast love”. One scholar described hesed as an act of God toward man.
An act of ‘hesed’ presupposes the existence of relationship between two parties involved, but where no formal relationship has previously been recognized, the person exercising ‘hesed’ has chosen to treat the recipient as if such a relationship did exist.¹

I prefer to define hesed as covenant love. Covenants are commitments that are made with not only words, but with sacred oaths and the shedding of blood. The closest picture of covenant found in today’s society is a wedding ceremony. Ancients would often ‘cut’ a covenant with another party by cutting an animal in half and walking between the two pieces of the butchered animal declaring, “May I become like this animal if I ever violate the terms of our agreement.” Hesed is the love the flows out of this type of commitment.

We declare, “His hesed endures forever!” Jesus has brought us into covenant through His blood and our praise is now based upon His steadfast love toward us. As we worship, we are empowered by hesed and not by the circumstances of our life because His love never fails.

Worship Is Recognition

Recognizing what Jesus has done releases power into our lives to make us overcomers. Believing in Jesus releases a flow of living waters!

Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. (John 7:38-39)

Jesus said that His glorification would release the gift of the Spirit. We can simplify the idea of glorification as meaning recognition. Recognition means “the acknowledgment of

something’s existence, validity, or legality or appreciation or acclaim for an achievement, service, or ability.”

When we exalt Jesus and recognize Him for who He is even in the midst of trials, we receive the Spirit of God into our lives.

Christians need power, so Christians must worship. We must become risk takers in our worship and not let the flaming darts of the enemy stop our praise on earth. I am determined that my song will not end until it reaches the heart of God and I feel His Spirit flowing out of me like a stream.

The name Theodore means gift of God. Theodore Roosevelt’s life and words are a gift to bring us courage for the days ahead. We live in a crucial time and must no longer allow the enemy to distract us and put us on the defensive. Christians must get in the game and play offense! We must push aside the negativity and press into Jesus. President Roosevelt left us with these valuable words:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

— Theodore Roosevelt

I hope this book encourages you to stand up and minister to the God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ! Don’t hold back or

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store up your worship for another day! Surround the throne of God with your praise. Lavish the LORD with glory due His name.

Reflection

1. What is developed in your life as you persevere? Do you persevere in your worship regardless of your preference?
2. Theodore Roosevelt is a great example of perseverance and character. Describe a time when you were required to persevere and the character that was developed in you.
3. Define the Hebrew word "hesed."
4. King Jehoshapat put singers at the head of his army. How would you feel if you were asked to lead the army into battle with nothing more than a song to God?
5. Do you have a vision and mission statement for your life that has been inspired by God?
Cities, Gates and Elders answers the question of why Jesus told Peter, “...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). The disciples of Jesus understood that the gates were gateways in which the elders of the city would sit and judge. The decisions made at these gates had authoritative power over regions. Jesus was saying that the decisions made in hell would not prevail against the decisions made on earth by His people.

The first word in most English dictionaries is aardvark. If you were to open up a Hebrew dictionary, you would discover the first word is father. The Hebrew language begins with the most important word you will ever need to know. The book Heaven’s Dynasty rediscovers the Father emphasis each of us need to have in our daily lives and the understanding of how to pass on the generational blessing as God did Himself to His Son. Do you know God as Father?
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